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ABSTRACT

This study is the pilot project of a feasibility study to measure a community's receptiveness to a tax increase for public library capital improvements and to plan the marketing campaign to improve the likelihood of passage in Lake County, Ohio. This initial phase of the survey examined the pertinent profile of one community, the Village of Timberlake. This pilot study allows the development and refinement of the final survey instrument and offers some preliminary conclusions to be examined by the library administration and the board of trustees. The objectives of this survey are: to determine the voters' satisfaction with the existing buildings and facilities; to identify which services are of most importance to the voters; to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the library's public image; and to identify the areas of support and resistance concerning the tax referendum. A copy of the telephone survey instrument is appended. (Contains 18 references.) (JLB)

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WILLOUGHBY-EASTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY
A Preliminary Survey of Voter Attitudes

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Virginia E. Jeschelnig

August, 1990

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library, a school district library system in Lake County, Ohio, has identified the need for additional tax support from its community. A feasibility study was prepared by David Holzheimer and Associates and was presented in late March 1990. It detailed the preliminary plans for and costs of capital improvements to the library's three buildings and the construction of administrative office space. Because the current budget does not allow for the addition of such extensive improvements, it is necessary to calculate the community's willingness to approve a levy or bond issue before any long range building projects may be planned.

In order to determine the political climate concerning this issue, a telephone survey of a scientific random sampling of the community's registered voters is being undertaken. The library district is comprised of seven separate municipalities, varying in size, demographic profile, and voting habits. There are 24,000 voting households across the district. The sample size for the whole population will be 300-400, and these interviews will be conducted by a professional marketing firm. Attitudes will be measured in four areas: 1) library facilities (physical plants); 2) library services; 3) library image; and 4) support for a tax levy or bond issue.

The initial in-house phase of the survey examined the pertinent profile of one community, The Village of Timberlake. This pilot study allows the development and refinement of the final survey instrument and offers some preliminary conclusions

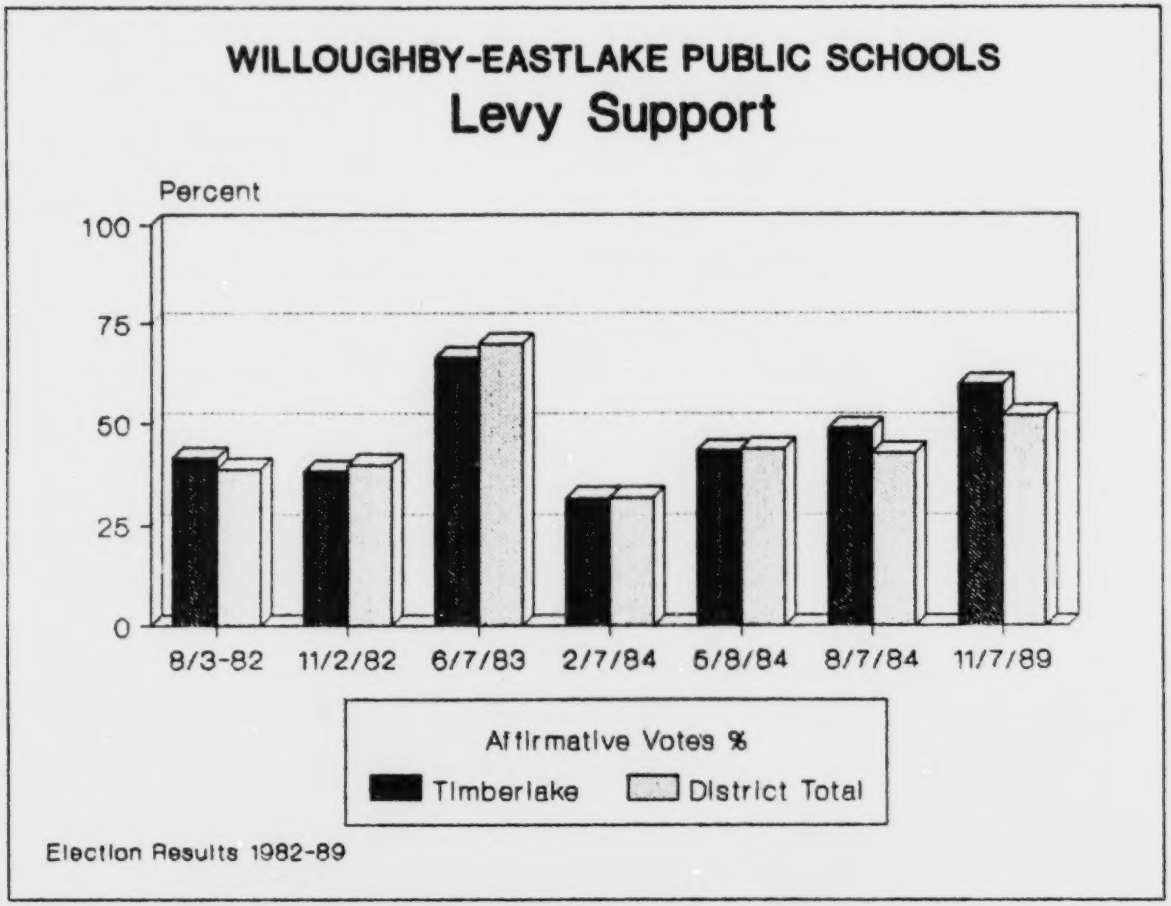
to be examined by the administration and the board of trustees.

Regarding Timberlake as the pilot community to be studied, some basic demographic information can be drawn from published sources such as the Market Profile Analysis 1989. Using Timberlake's U.S. Government census tract number 2023.02, it is possible to identify specific profile data.

The 1989 estimate for Timberlake's population is 764 persons living in 278 households. The Lake County Board of Elections records 518 voters living in 257 households as of March 17, 1990. The median household income is estimated at $34,137. Only 11% of those households have an annual income of less than $15,000; 70% earn in excess of $25,000. One fifth of the total earn more than $50,000. Distributing the population by age, 22% fall between 18 and 34; 29% between 35 and 54; 18% are age 55 and over. The median age in 1980 was 34 years. Educational measures indicate that 19% of the adult population consists of college graduates; 28% hold professional positions. Stability is a feature of the community with 64% having been residents for 10 or more years.[1]

Of additional interest are the voting habits as reflected by Timberlake's participation in school levy elections. Chart 1 summarizes the data available from the Willoughby-Eastlake School Board as it relates to the village. There is an interesting relationship between the district totals and the village totals in the percentages of "yes" votes. Whether or not the library holds the same image as the local school district, and whether or not residents will vote in ways made predicchart by the school experience, remains to be seen. One might expect

CHART 1. W-E SCHOOLS LEVY SUPPORT



to see a correlation because their roles in the community overlap. School officials generally expect Timberlake to favor education. In 1980, 31% of the village population was under 18.

The Study Objectives

The objectives for the survey are:

1. To determine the voters' satisfaction with the existing buildings and facilities.

2. To identify which services are of most importance to the voters.

3. To examine the strengths and weaknesses of the library's public image.

4. To identify the areas of support and resistance concerning the tax referendum.

By meeting these objectives, the public relations issues vital to a successful campaign can be clarified. If the results of the final study indicated wholesale refusal to increase property taxes, the costly and exhausting prospect of a failed levy campaign could be avoided.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of the professional literature was concentrated in three subject areas: 1) community analysis and its value in public library research and development; 2) library survey construction with a political viewpoint; and 3) surveys as a measure of a library's goals and objectives. These and numerous related topics (e.g. tax campaigns, finance, use studies, marketing, etc.) were examined in Library Literature (1975-89), Library and Information Science Abstracts (1975-89), Catalyst (KSU), Dissertation Abstracts International (1980-89), and Social Sciences Citation Index (1980-89). It is clear that, while there is a great volume of samples of user studies and suggested methods for conducting survey research, there is very little published information about this specific type of community query. Pertinent information is highlighted in the following discussion.

Community analysis has a long history in American librarianship. For nearly 100 years, it has been recognized that the library does not exist in a vacuum, and its leaders must understand the social and political life of the town that surrounds it.[2] At the beginning of the 1940s, the basic methodology for doing such an analysis was clarified by Edmund Wight in "Methods and Techniques of Library Surveys," and Erret McDiarmid in The Library Survey.[3] Later works strongly recommend the use of available statistical information to gather as much data as possible prior to the survey phase, in order to reduce costs and avoid needless duplication of efforts.[4]

Many leaders in librarianship, along with the Public Library Association, advocate ongoing community analysis as a fundamental role of administration. As noted by Samuel Johnson, "The future is purchased by the present."[5]

The sharp contrast between information drawn from community analysis versus user surveys is examined by Herbert White, who cautions that the latter is a type of ballot stuffing that may measure popularity but not real performance.[6] In their introduction to their bibliography on community analysis, Achleitner and Neroda confirm that the best approach for examining library performance and community attitudes is to survey a sample of the whole population, not library users.[7] With this methodological approach, Janet Lange conducted her telephone survey of a southern California county.[8] Portions of this project provide a helpful model for preparing the Willoughby-Eastlake questionnaire.

Lange's study examines use patterns in the larger community. Her purpose was to define the demographic profiles of light, moderate and heavy users of the library. By identifying the audience, Lange's study aided library administrators in planning strategies for marketing and improving services. The WEPL study will perform the same function as applied to a tax campaign. Lange's methodology provides guidance in using a telephone survey to gather reliable data.

An earlier study by the Northeast Ohio Regional Planning Commission used interviews to prepare a community profile for developing a branch library plan.[9] A study of the library's

image as perceived by the user population was completed for the Franklin County Public Libraries by Yocum and Stocker.[10] Both of these surveys provide specific planning information for library administrators in the same fashion proposed by the WEPL study.

The construction of a library survey to examine the local political climate is addressed by Massey in "Market Analysis and Audience Research for Libraries."[11] He advocates a consumer - orientation to library planning, using "benefit segmentation"[12] to examine both the community of consumers and nonusers. Utilizing the survey method to understand the library's image is the very type of market research likely to yield essential planning strategies and identify public relations needs.

The pragmatic examination of funding strategies is examined by Cecil Beach.[13] He notes that 82% of the dollar support of libraries comes from the local community. Therefore, library administrators benefit from viewing their community as a constituency rather than patron groups. The management of a tax campaign is specifically addressed by Bushing in "Strategies for Passing a Referendum."[14] Among the recommendations is noted the key role played by a political community analysis which measures the receptivity of the voters to passing the referendum. After the supporters have been counted, the chances of winning will determine whether or not to proceed with a campaign. A candid look at a local political climate and its impact on library funding is offered by Valerie Darst.[15] The essential role of community analysis in measuring political support and market penetration is outlined by Douglas Zweizig[16] and Alice Norton.[17]

An example of library market research using an interview technique can be found in the study by Coleman and Yorke.[18] By using a quota sample of specified segments totalling 5% of the population, the study examined the type of services desired by the whole community.

In the area of finance for capital improvements, a study by Shirk determined that only 4.8% of public libraries surveyed utilize special tax levies.[19] The key factor determining this choice is the probability of voter approval.

A third area of investigation regarding surveys and the community is the measurement of the achievement of the library's goals and objectives. DeProspo notes that in addition to examining the voters' attitudes in the area of tax support, the survey describes the image of the library held by the voters, their satisfaction with and participation in its programs and services.[20] The survey involves a reciprocal process. Muriel Fuller, of the University of Wisconsin Library School, points to community analysis as a measure of the community's satisfaction, revealing the extent to which needs are met in light of library objectives.[21] It also provides a springboard for planning for the future, targeting areas in need of attention. In her article on planning, however, Mary Jo Detweiler warns that the scope of information gathering should be carefully limited to a manageable size, defining only those areas that may be reasonably addressed in the immediate future.[22]

III. METHODOLOGY

Survey methodology using a telephone questionnaire was employed in this pilot study. The study consisted of five phases: 1) preparation of a demographic profile of the Village of Timberlake, drawn from existing census and published marketing information; 2) construction of a questionnaire examining the four stated survey objectives; 3) completion of 30 telephone interviews of a scientific random sample of registered voters listed in the Timberlake file prepared by the Lake County Board of Elections; 4) collation of data and conclusions drawn to reveal a community attitude profile; and 5) presentation of a final report to the Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library Director, Dolly Gundersen, and the Board of Trustees.

The questionnaire was thoughtfully constructed to examine specific aspects of voter opinion. As mentioned in the literature search, few published studies pertained directly to the WEPL survey. The voter survey completed by Decision Research Corporation of Cleveland, Ohio, for the Mentor Public Library proved to be the most pertinent document available. It queried a similar population and sought the same type of information regarding voter opinion. Best of all, it was proven to be accurate in predicting the outcome of the actual election.

Because this DRC questionnaire was tested, it was helpful to use it as a guide for developing the structure and some of the specific items in the WEPL survey. In order to use the DRC document in this way, permission was obtained from Mentor's Director, Dale Craig. (That library owns the survey.)

In the WEPL questionnaire, the initial introduction of the interviewer included the following features: 1) an explanation of the purpose of the survey and identification of the organization involved; 2) disclosure of how the results will be used (confidentiality); 3) a request for permission to proceed with the questions; and 4) an estimate of the time required to complete the interview.

An important consideration in the writing phase was the 15 minute length of the survey. A similar voter query done by the Willoughby-Eastlake Public Schools was roughly the same length, as was the DRC interview. There was no significant resistance by respondents because of time in either case. In the execution of the WEPL interviews, because of the sensitive public relations nature of the library's levy campaign, care was taken to refrain from antagonizing any voter. The interviewer offered to call again if the timing of the initial call was inconvenient.

The following is a description of the specific objective behind each of the questions:

1. Eliminates any inactive voters.

2-3. Measures name recognition; clarifies system organization.

4-9. Addresses levy and cost.
(These numbers are valid but may vary slightly in the calculation of the actual cost of the levy and bond issue.)

10. Identifies positive public relations strategies.

11. Targets areas of resistance.

12-13. Examines benefits of public endorsements.

14-17. Establishes voter/user profile.

18. Identifies strengths and weaknesses of specific agencies.

19. Names competitors.

20. Measures voter preferences; services to be emphasized in campaign literature.

21-22. Reflects general image as static or dynamic organization.

23. Expands on questions 7 & 8; further clarifies campaign strategies.

24-27. Establishes demographic profile of respondent. (Household income was deliberately excluded because of the availability of that information from other sources and the sensitivity of that issue.)

Only interviewees indicating that they are likely to vote in an upcoming election were asked to complete the interview. Only two voters were eliminated because of this. Questions determined the following: 1) awareness that the library system exists; 2) familiarity with its programs and services; 3) which of those are of most value to the respondent and his/her family; 4) satisfaction with the existing facilities and services; 5) perceptions of the library (image); 6) interviewees' reasons to vote for or against a library levy.

Answers to questions were noted on a standard form and these were tallied at the end of the eleven day interview period, which began 7/11/90 and ended 7/22/90. Calls were made at two times of day, afternoon (12:00 - 4:00pm) and evening (6:45 - 8:45pm). Tallied answers were used to draw conclusions about the voting behavior and attitudes of the larger voting population of Timberlake (257 households).

IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA

From the list of registered voters living in the Village of Timberlake as of March 17, 1990, 86 households (33.46%) were randomly selected. Of the 52 homes (20.2%) successfully contacted: two were ineligible as non-voters; six women and fourteen men refused to answer the survey; twenty women and ten men (11.67%) completed the questionnaire.

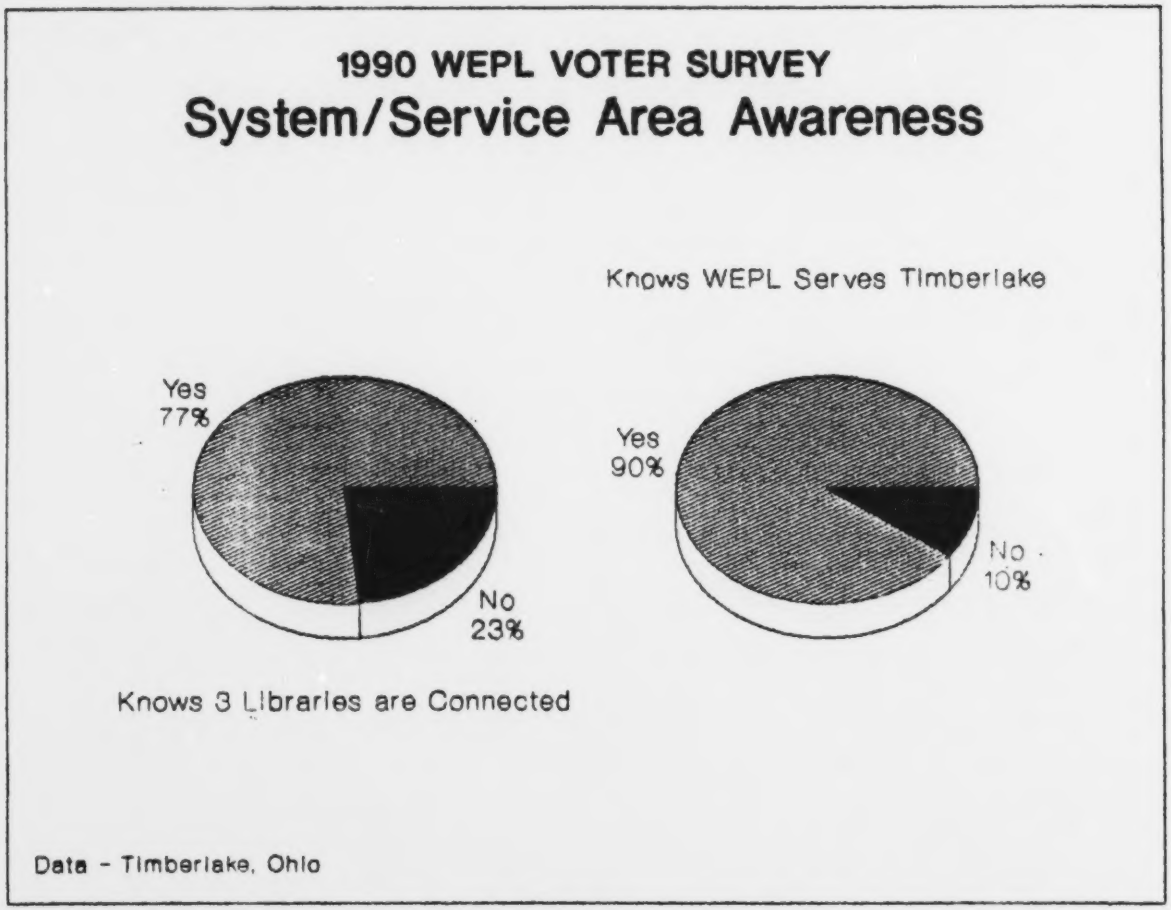
Only the results of the November election will test the possibility that voters refusing to answer the telephone survey may differ significantly in their voting behavior from the respondents. Researchers conducting such surveys report calling ratios of 2/1, 3/1 and more. The length of the questionnaire was not the point of resistance. Voters refusing to be interviewed indicate disinterest in all such telephone contact, possibly because of its connection to high pressure sales campaigns.

All 30 interviewees plan to vote in November; 90% are certain to vote. The gubernatorial election is likely to be a reason for the strong voter interest.

Questions 2 and 3 indicate satisfactory name recognition with 77% knowing the system's three libraries (the station library was not included in the list). Men are less familiar with the system; 50% do not know the connection between the three buildings. Timberlake's inclusion in WEPL's service area is known to 90% of the respondents. See Chart 2.

Questions 4 through 9 are of primary importance to the levy campaign. A substantial 73% indicate support for the .37 mill

CHART 2. SYSTEM / SERVICE AREA AWARENESS



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bond issue. Chart 3 shows the differences between the responses from men and women.

Supporters name the following reasons for their responses: six support libraries in general; six place great value on education, which they associate as a primary function of libraries; four are regular users of the system; four have young or school-age children for whom library service is essential; two cite the reasonable cost of the levy as a good value; two want improvement in the WEPL facilities/services. Other reasons mentioned include: the high quality of the staff; benefits to all age groups; population growth; enhancement of real estate value; the importance of reading; the importance of being up-to-date in services and facilities; comparison to other libraries which offer more; and support because a spouse is a frequent user.

Among those who oppose or are undecided about the bond issue, the following issues are cited: increased cost for any reason is unaffordable; property taxes are already too high; pinch of a fixed income; NO on ALL taxes; no improvement is needed in the WEPL buildings; the two tax issues should be combined to avoid deceiving the public; and only the most persuasive information will convince voter of need.

A slightly smaller proportion of the respondents, 70% support the operating levy. See Chart 4. Reasons given for supporting this companion issue include: reasonable cost for the levy; importance of keeping libraries current; support for WEPL; to maintain fair salaries for staff; trust that the library will ask only for necessary support ("They must need it."); a good

CHART 3. BOND ISSUE

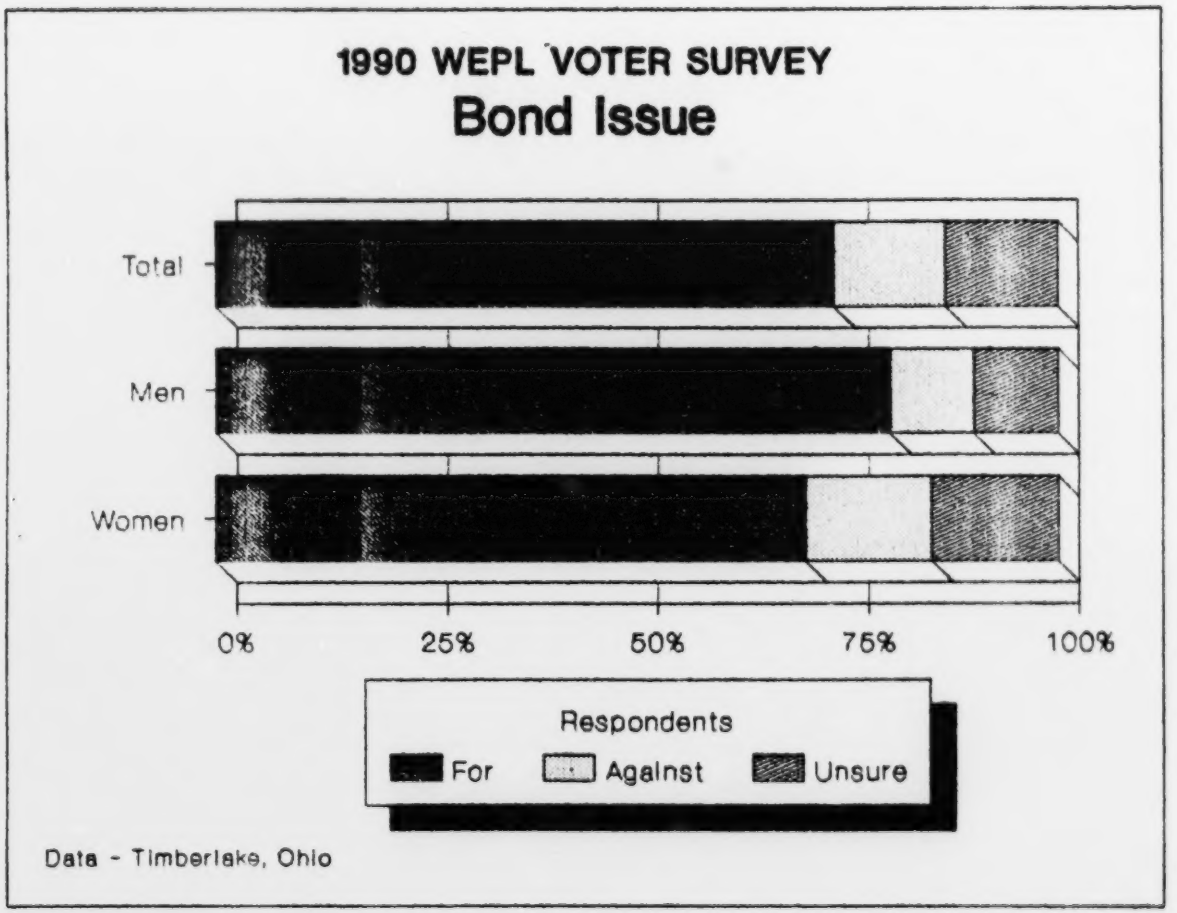

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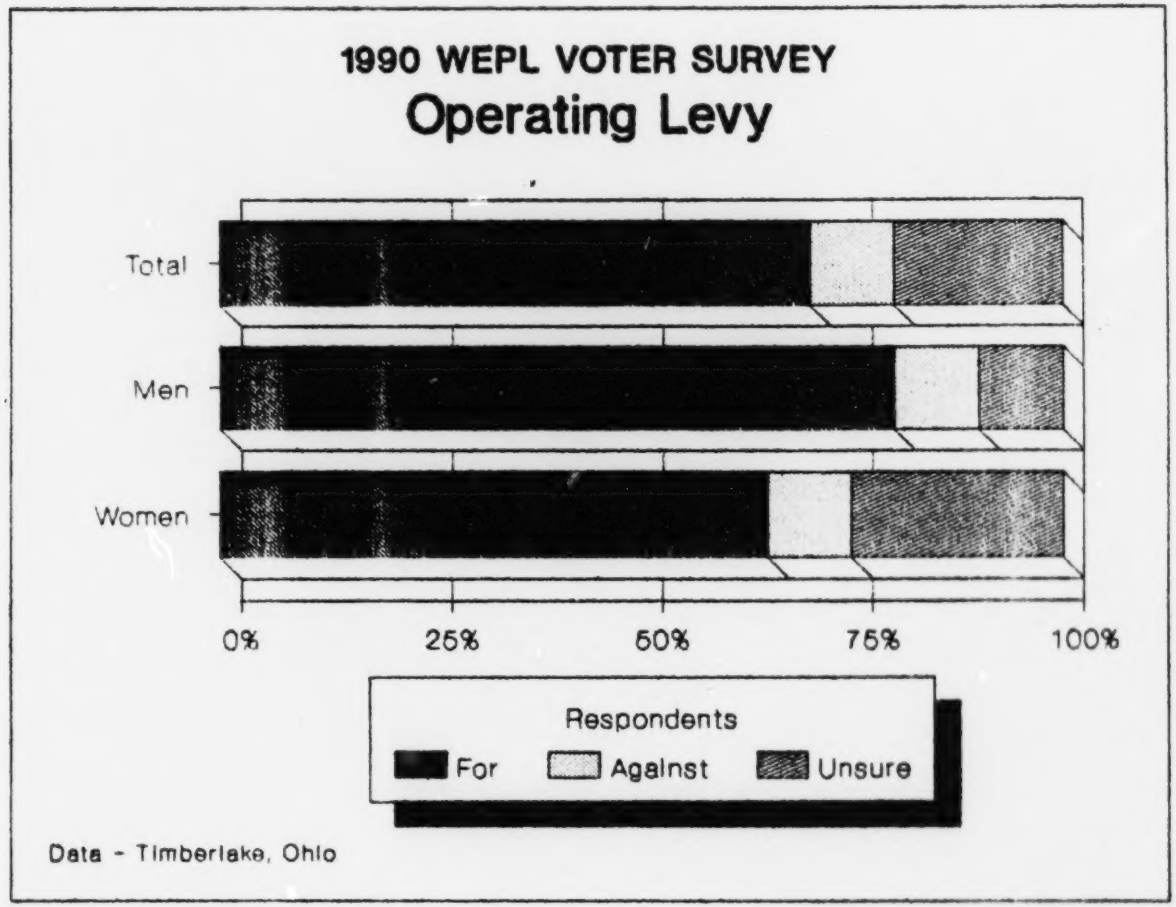
CHART 4. OPERATING LEVY



library system enhances property value in the community. One respondent's favorable reference to a newspaper article quoting the library's director may have been WEPL's levy press release or the introduction of the new director of Wickliffe Public Library.

Respondents opposing the levy cite cost as the main reason. One woman notes that her property taxes have increased by more than $500 over the past eight years. One of the men suggests that the library disassociate itself from the school district. Another woman strongly answered "against" for both the bond issue and levy. As the questionnaire continued, she rethought her position as she considered the services her family regularly enjoys. At the end of the survey, she changed her response to "for" in questions 4 and 7.

Question 10 identifies some positive public relations strategies. All are well received by strong majorities. See Chart 5. The three proposals evoking the most positive responses (93%) are additional shelf space, added room for children's services, and better access for the handicapped. Separate seating areas for adults and children and space for community groups are favored by a smaller majority (70%). Respondents commenting on wheelchair access perceive that to be a necessity. Some also mention the usefulness of elevators for strollers. Persons commenting about the addition of more computer equipment accept its importance but often consider themselves non-users of such technology. ("It's important for the kids.")

Question 11 addresses possible points of resistance. See Chart 6. All respondents disagree with the statement "having a

CHART 5. REASONS TO EXPAND / IMPROVE

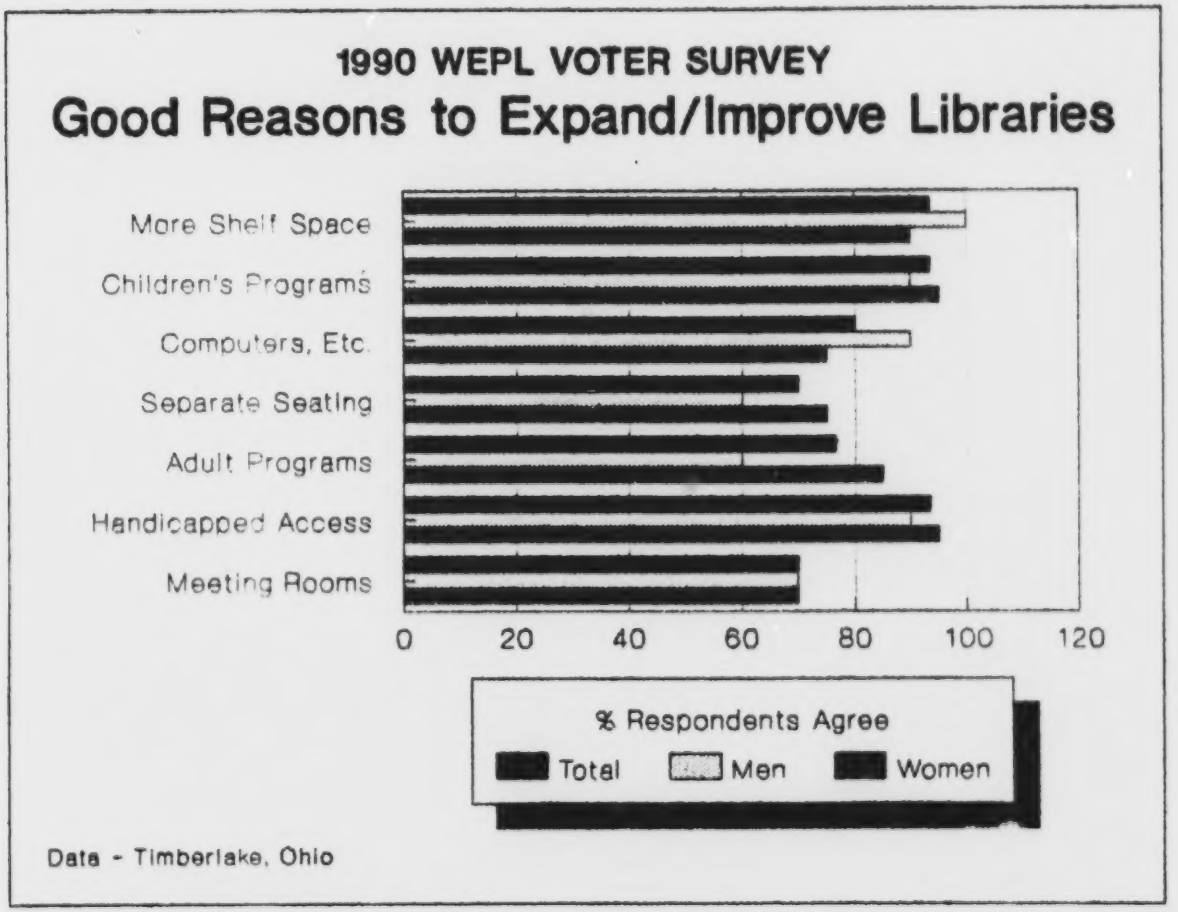
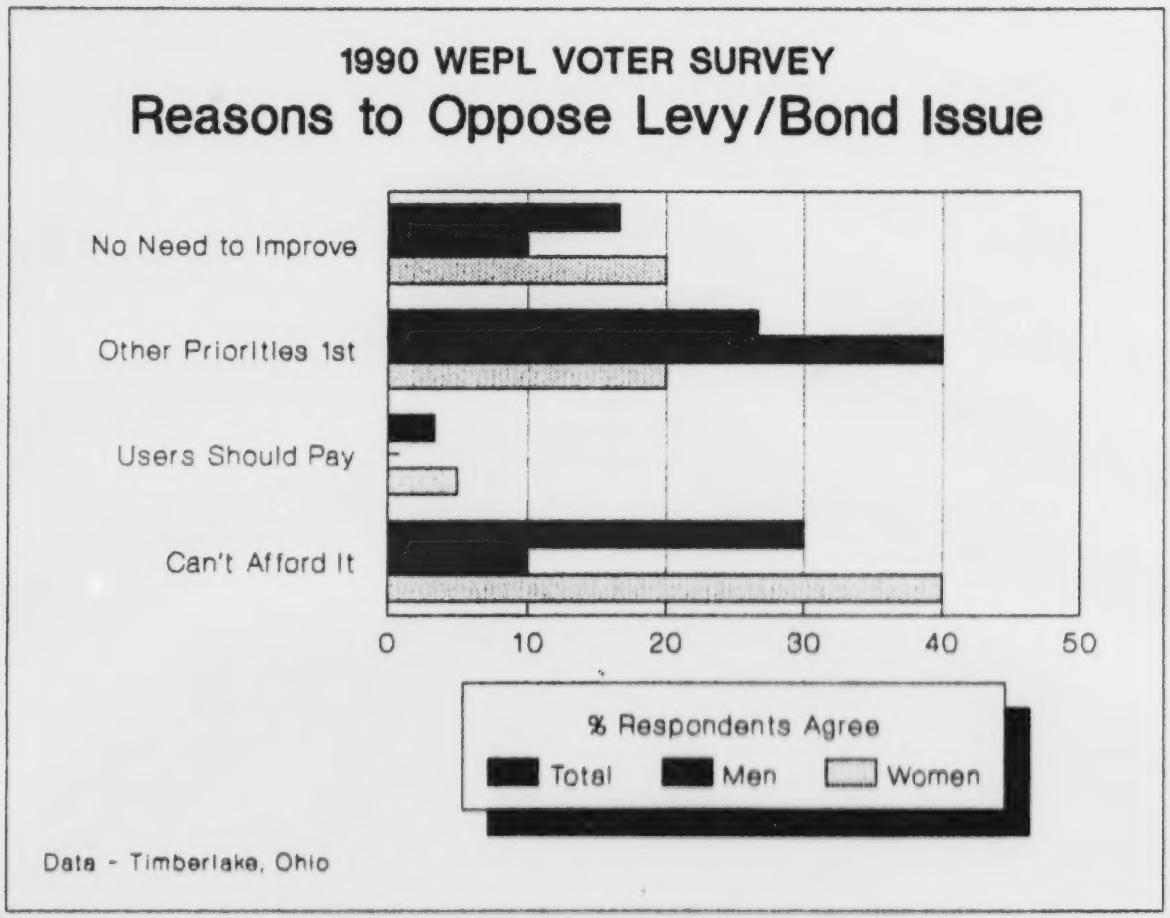


CHART 6. REASONS TO OPPOSE LEVY / BOND ISSUE



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good library system isn't as important as it used to be." In fact, 50% strongly disagree, indicating a sound base of support for library services whether or not the individual is a user. In addition, 97% believe that library costs should be shared by the whole community rather than on a fee-for-use basis.

As expected, money is the greatest point of resistance. Thirty percent (30%) feel that they cannot afford the property tax increase despite their support for libraries. The same percentage (30%) feel that other spending priorities stand ahead of the libraries. In regard to library expansion and improvement, 27% are unconvinced of the need.

Questions 12 and 13 examine the benefits of endorsements. A majority of interviewees said it would make no difference whether politicians (80%) or the local newspapers (63%) support the campaign. The impact of a negative position by public officials or the newspaper was not examined as it is not expected. A minority (33%) report that a newspaper endorsement has some influence on their opinions.

Questions 14 through 17 report levels of library use. See Chart 7. As has been shown in other library surveys of voters, borrower registration and usage levels among this group are much higher than that of the general population. Among the respondents, 77% have one or more library cards in the household and 60% are, or have been, regular users (at least once a month).

Of the library users, 61% visit the Eastlake Library most often, and 35% use the Willowick location. See Charts 8 and 9. In rating the helpfulness of the librarians, 52% say their

CHART 7. USAGE PROFILE

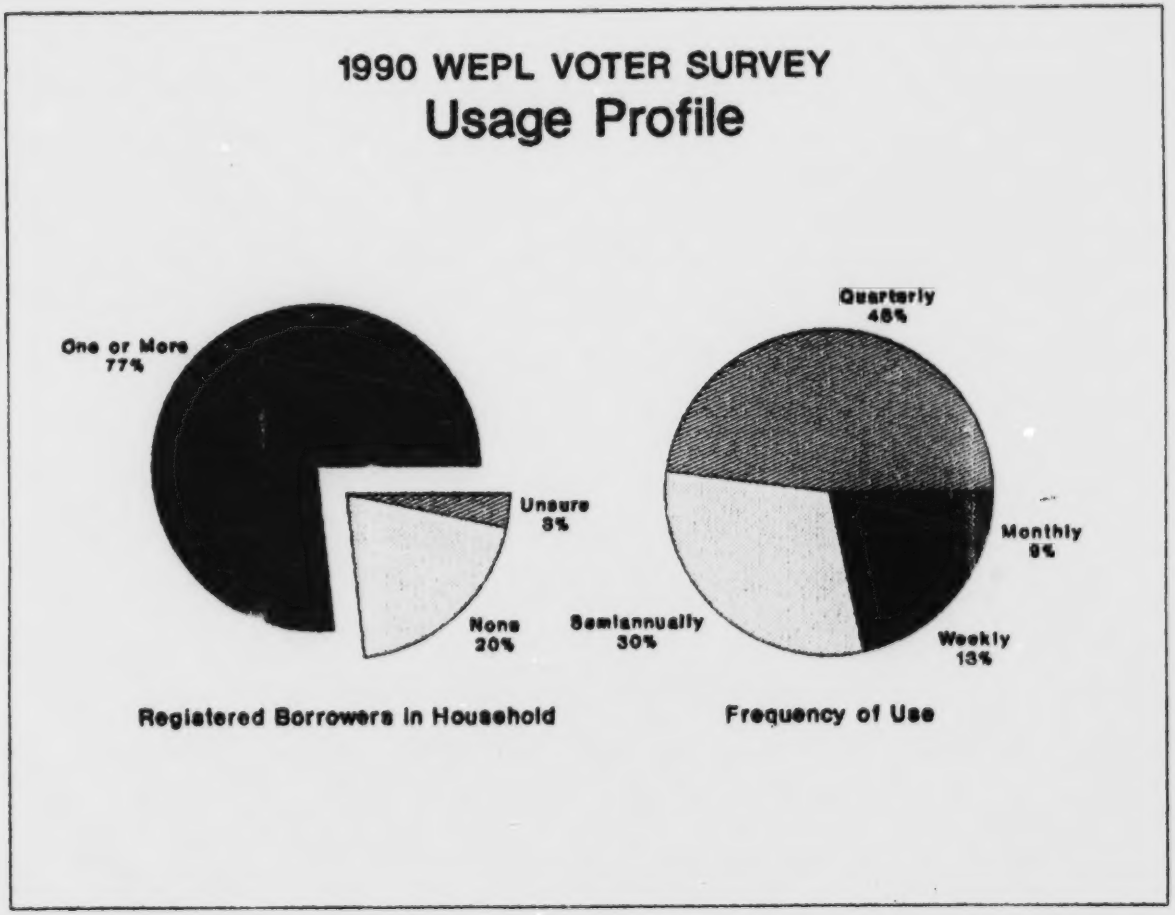

CHART 8. ASSESSMENT OF EASTLAKE LIBRARY

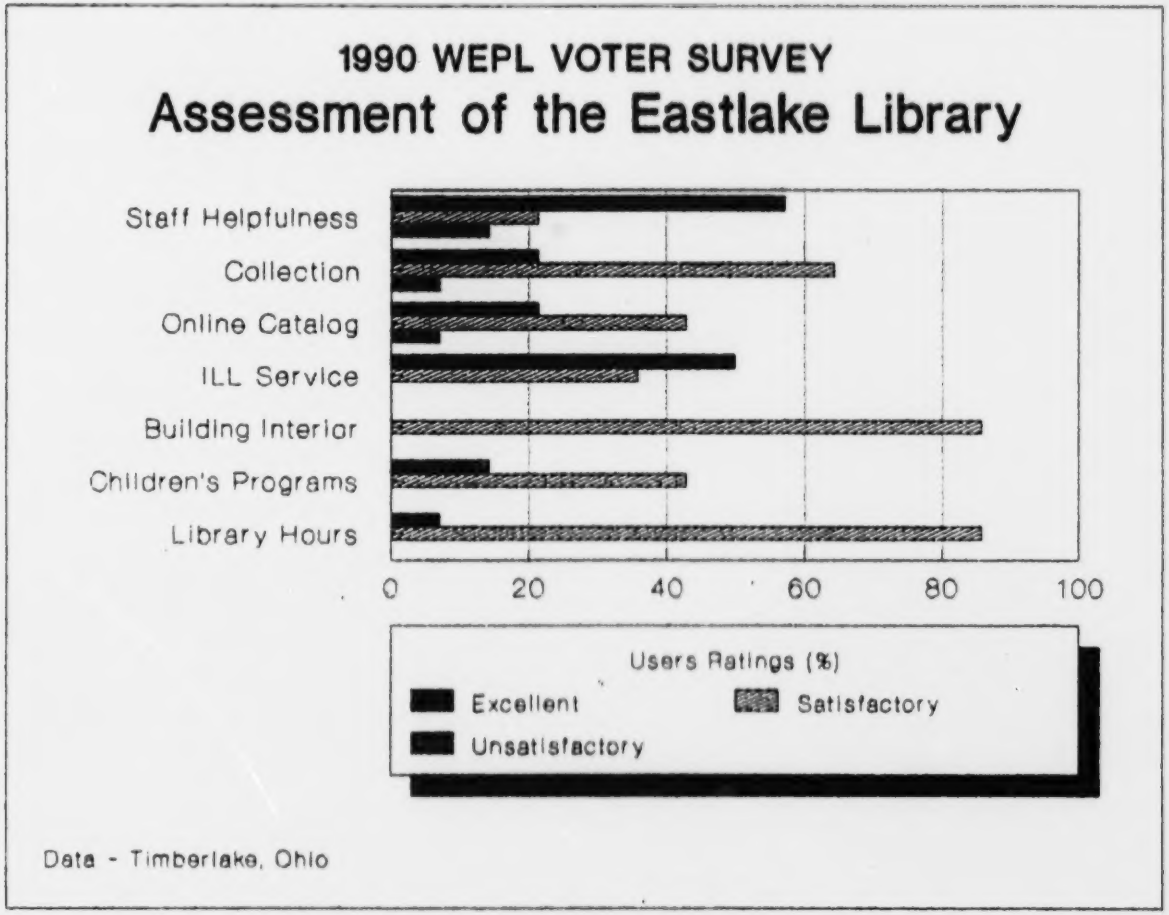

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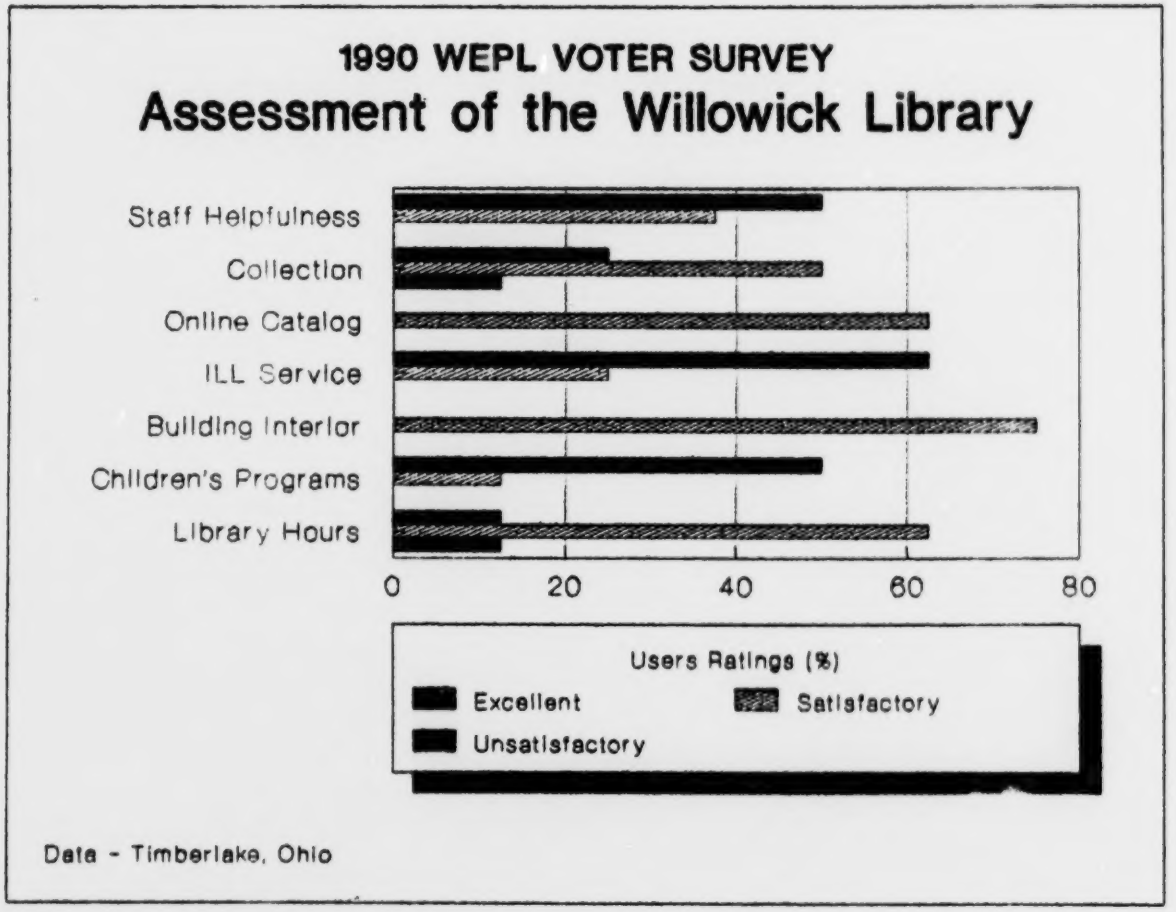
CHART 9. ASSESSMENT OF WILLOWICK LIBRARY



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service is excellent; 26% rate it satisfactory; only 9% are dissatisfied; the rest have no opinion. In rating the quality of the collection for their needs, 22% find it to be excellent; 57% rate it satisfactory; 9% are dissatisfied; the remainder have no opinion. The ease of using the automated system to locate items has one of the highest numbers of respondents who were unfamiliar with the service (30%). These users avoid using the database and often remark that their children use it with ease. Only one respondent finds the computer unsatisfactory, while 48% feel it is satisfactory, and 13% rate it as excellent.

The interlibrary loan system enjoys wide acceptance with 52% rating it as excellent and 30% finding it satisfactory. The appearances of the building interiors are satisfactory to 83% of the interviewees; the rest are unsure.

No respondent is dissatisfied with the children's programs, although 43% have no children participating and therefore no opinion. Among the thirteen with children, six rate the programs as excellent; the other seven rate them as satisfactory. In general, the library's hours are perceived as being satisfactory (83%).

When asked about usage of other public libraries, 74% say they rarely if ever use one outside the WEPL system. Other libraries used by respondents are: Cleveland Public, Painesville Morley Public, Mentor Public, Wickliffe Public, Cuyahoga County Public (Mayfield Regional), Euclid Public, Lakeland Community College, Lake Erie College, and Canton Public.

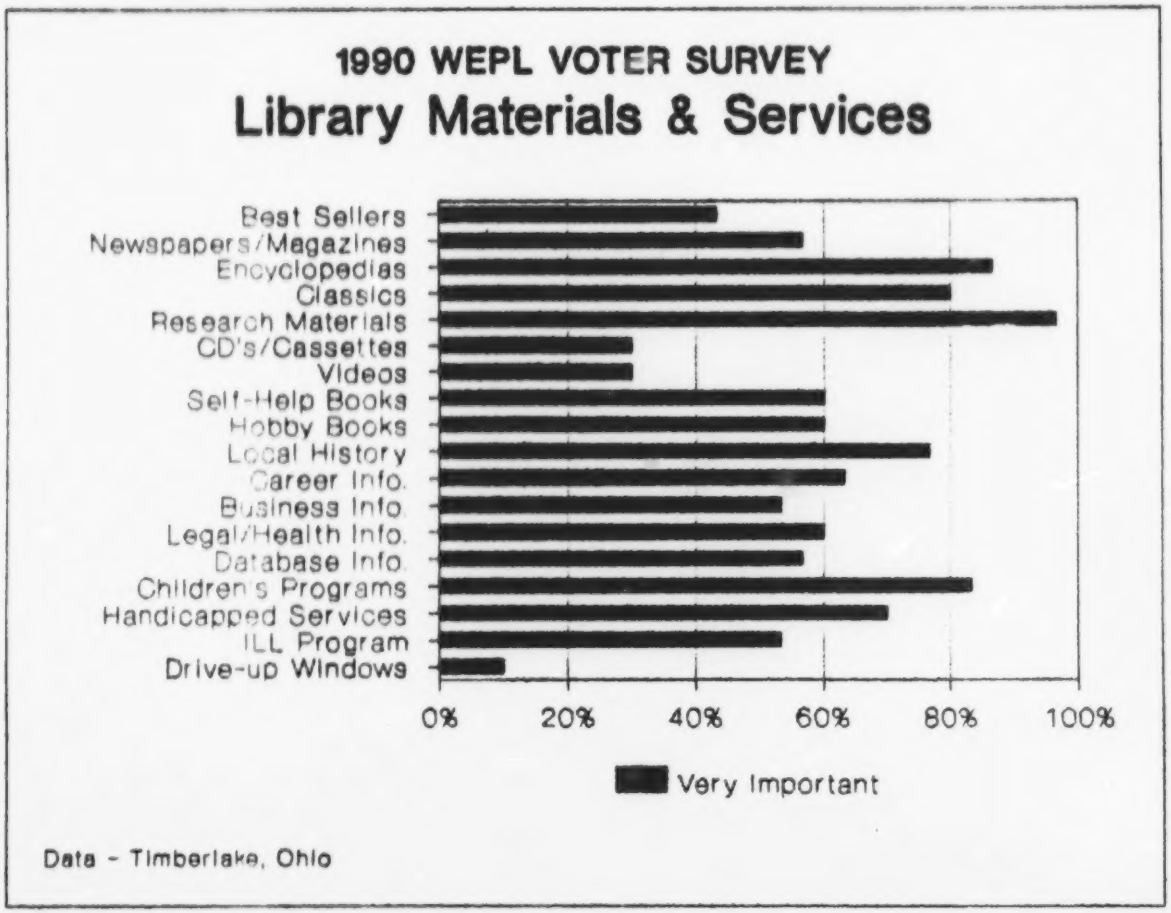
Question 20 examines the preferences of respondents for various library media and services. See Chart 10. All eighteen items are favored by a large majority with the exception of drive-up windows which are viewed as being unimportant by 57%.

Respondents almost unanimously (97%) rated curricular support and research materials as being a very important library offering. In addition to general perceptions of the library's role in providing materials for students, this attitude may be enhanced by the fact that the local schools have abysmal building collections and little or no professional media staff. WEPL is the only viable community source for student research. In tandem with this, a second high approval rating was logged for encyclopedias and reference books (87% very important). Eighty per cent of interviewees feel it is very important for the library to collect literary classics, although none professes to be a reader of these.

The provision of programs for children is strongly favored by 83% (100% of the men); and 70% feel special services and materials for handicapped patrons are very important. These factors correlate with the 93% support for capital improvements benefitting both groups (see Question 10).

The collection of local history materials is perceived as very important by 77% (90% of the men), although neither the Eastlake nor the Willowick libraries have more than sparse holdings and neither community has an active historical society. None of the respondents remarked about these facts.

CHART 10. MATERIALS & SERVICES



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Career information is considered to be very important by 63%. Other non-fiction sources including self-help/self-improvement books, hobby materials, and legal and health information are very important to 60% of the interviewees. One user who identified himself as an attorney expresses deep concern about the provision of legal information. He notes the danger in people using such information, which might be dated or misleading, in lieu of professional legal advice. ("A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.") He does not feel the problem is that librarians interpret the information, but rather the nature of the sources themselves.

Newspapers and magazines are strongly favored by 57% of the respondents. The general perception of their entertainment value rather than their information function is prevalent in those who made comments. Business and investment information is rated as very important by 53% (40% of the men). Because Timberlake users visit Eastlake and Willowick, where the business collection is not a strength, its value may not be fully appreciated.

Information via computer databases is rated as very important by 57%, in spite of the fact that 35% of the user group is unfamiliar with the basic WEPL database. Those respondents commenting refer to computer-based information sources as the most current or as a necessary feature of a modern system.

Interlibrary loans are a very important service to 53%. One dissenting voice commented that because librarians are so dedicated to their work and care deeply about the quality of their collections, ILL programs are a poor idea. When patrons

borrow items directly from a library and do not return them, it is the "painful cost of doing business." The patron is blamed. However, when a neighboring library borrows material on behalf of its patrons, and items are lost, blame is assigned to the borrowing library. Frequent such occurrences will make dedicated librarians reluctant to share holdings information and increase territorial attitudes, thereby closing access that might otherwise exist freely.

Current best sellers are strongly favored by 43%. The same percentage feel that they are somewhat important. Dissenting voices refer to the "low quality" of much of the literature in this grouping.

Finally, A-V materials are very important to 30%; 57% somewhat favor audio cassettes and CD's; 50% feel that videos are somewhat important. Women tend to favor the A-V formats more strongly than the men; 35% feel that these formats are very important while only 20% of the men feel this way.

In Question 21, the perception of the library's overall progress during the last five years is measured. The seven non-users had no opinion. Of the 23 users, 65% said that the library is better than it was five years ago. Reasons given for the improvement: five said the automation program was a good change, and two note the continued improvement in the collection. Other stated reasons include: the staff attitudes, the interlibrary loan program, the summer playground visits, a warm attitude toward children, and the A-V collection. One respondent reports hearing about WEPL improvement through word of mouth, and one

long time user has seen the system "come a long way" over the years. Another user said she has seen improvement but wants to see more progress to match the materials and services of the Lakewood Public Library.

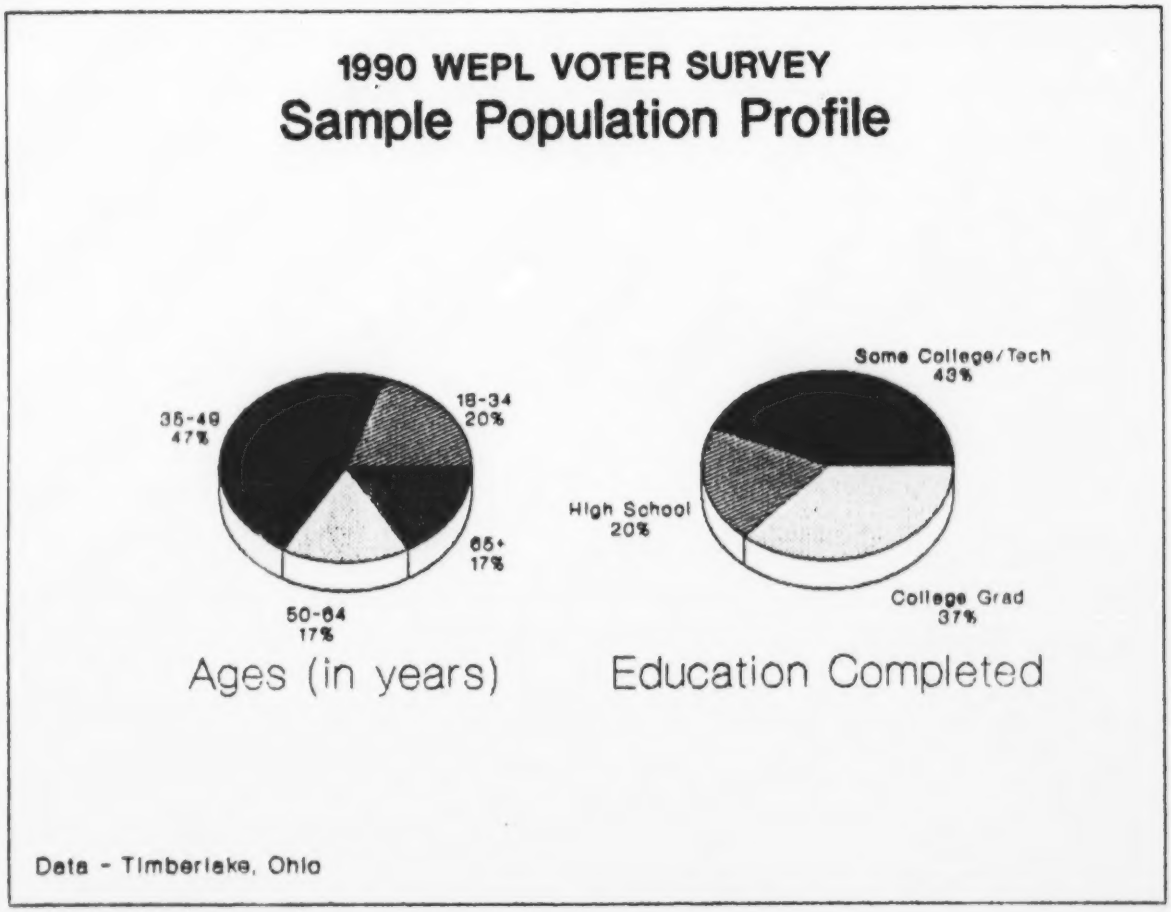
Question 23 builds on the data collected in questions 10 and 11. Despite the fact that 20% are unconvinced of their own need for public library services, 100% of interviewees agree that a good local library is important. All but a few of the nonusers agree that WEPL provides good service to its community; the nonusers had no opinion. Ninety percent agree that library improvement/expansion is necessary to meet the community's growing needs, and 97% believe that a good library system is important to a community's quality of life.

Concerning the library board's administration of tax dollars, 67% believe that it is doing well and the remaining minority had no opinion. No respondent is critical of the current administration of funds. While 14% of respondents believe that all tax issues should be voted down, 93% believe that library improvements are an investment in the community's future.

Of the 30 interviewees, 20% fall in the 18-34 age group; 47% range from 35-49; 17% from 50-64; and 17% over age 64. See Chart 11. The age distribution is similar to that of the general 1980 census age distribution in the village.

Of the 30 interviewees, 20% have completed only high school; 43% have completed some college or technical schooling; and 37% are college graduates. See Chart 11. As of the 1980 census,

CHART 11. PROFILE (AGE & EDUCATION)



only 19% of the general population of Timberlake were college graduates. The disparity between the two percentages may be due to the selection of registered voters for the sample population, the size of the sample, and changes in the community's demographic profile since 1980.

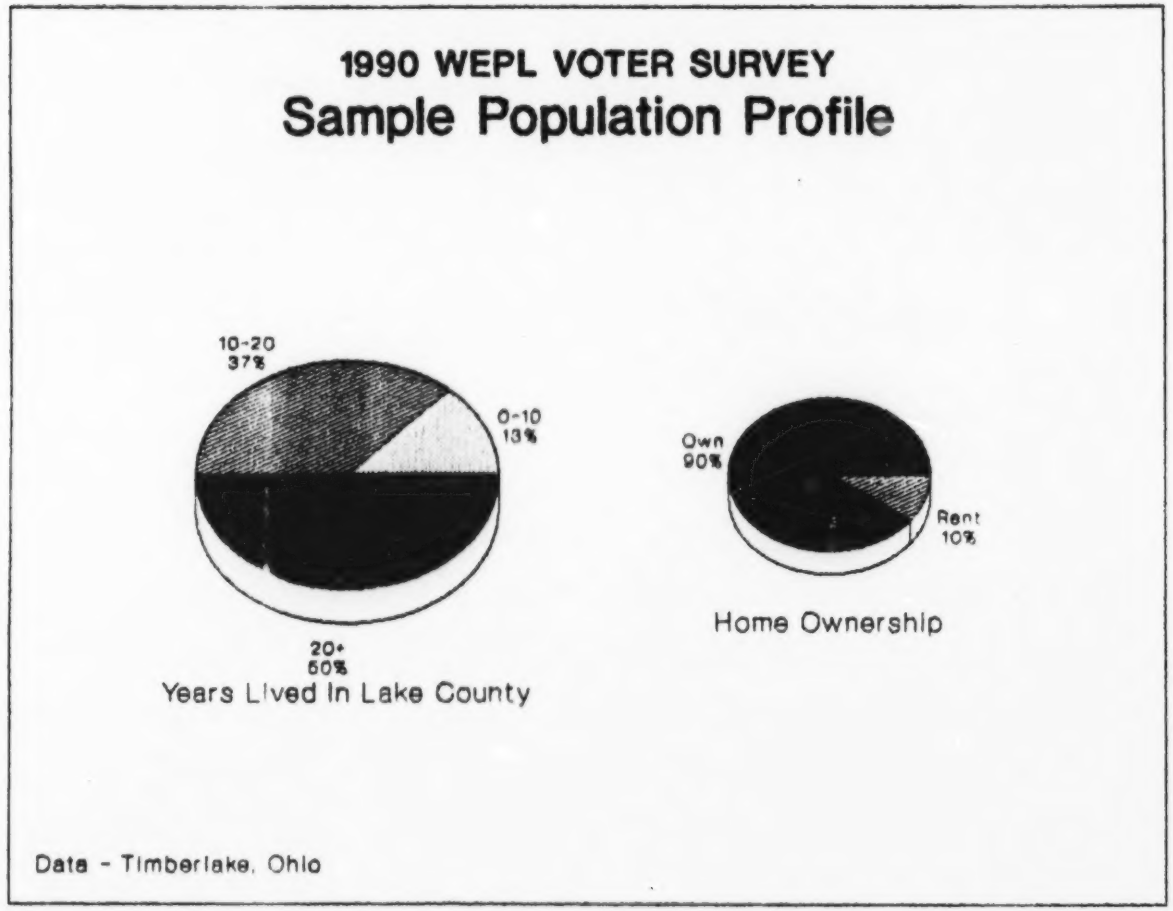
Ninety percent of the respondents own their homes, and 87% have been Lake County residents for more than ten years. See Chart, 12.

In order to profile the four "no" and three "undecided" voters as a subgroup, some of their responses may be examined separately. Six of the seven are women. Their age distribution mimics that of the whole group. Their educational level differs: more than half completed high school only; the balance have some college or technical schooling. None are college graduates. This factor may have significant impact on household income and, therefore, the ability to afford tax increases.

In general, this group's awareness of the WEPL system and its service to Timberlake is lower than in the pro-levy group (71% vs. 96%). Only two support adding library space for community groups and less than half see a need for space for adult programming. However, the majority agree that there is reason to improve or expand the library buildings.

The increase in property taxes is the objection of 71%. Only one "no" voter feels that endorsements by politicians or the newspaper would have a positive influence on her opinion. One woman claims that a mayoral endorsement would make her less likely to vote in favor of the issues.

CHART 12. PROFILE (RESIDENCY)



Four of the seven are cardholders and regular WEPL users. Two use Willowick and two visit Eastlake. Their rating of the quality of these buildings and services closely follows that of the larger group of users. Only one visits a library outside the WEPL system (Painesville Morley Public Library).

Their assessment of services closely follows that of the whole sample, with the exception of one respondent who opposes most materials outside the classics and basic reference books. As a group, the "no" voters are less enthusiastic about computer database resources. They are supportive of children's services but somewhat less favorable toward special services for the handicapped.

Three of the four users see improvement in the WEPL system, and five see a personal need for public library services. The majority believe library improvements are worthwhile, but three of the four are determined to vote against all tax increases.

All the "no" voters are homeowners and all have lived in Lake County more than ten years.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library enjoys a positive image in the Village of Timberlake. Based upon the survey data, both the library bond issue and operating levy have an excellent chance of passage in November in this precinct. A full 73% of respondents indicated their support for the bond issue and 70% support the operating levy. Seventy-seven percent have one or more library cards and 60% are or have been regular users of the system.

The voter group generally values education and the role played by the library in the quality of life in their community. Respondents frequently mentioned the library's vital role in education for children and the importance of reading. The library has escaped the negative image problems that have plagued the local school district. It commands a large measure of trust.

Respondents indicate satisfaction with the library system, characterizing it as one that provides good service.

Although Timberlake differs in its demographic profile from the other six communities in the library district, its voting history in school levy elections is similar to the district totals. To this limited extent, Timberlake voters' views of the library may mirror the opinions found in the district as a whole. The second phase of the survey will draw a clearer picture.

The publication of bond issue and levy information may persuade some of the undecided voters. It is unlikely that the plans the library has prepared or the thrust of its campaign will antagonize the voting public thereby increasing the "no" votes.

A lack of money, rather than opposition to the library, is the most frequently cited reason for voting "no." The library's ability to persuade these voters of the value of its services will determine the extent to which their position may be changed. The relatively low cost of the library levy/bond issue is pivotal to keeping the percentage of such voters low.

The fact that all respondents agree that libraries are more important than ever paints an optimistic view of Willoughby-Eastlake's chances for success on November 6, 1990.

Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library Telephone Questionnaire

A SURVEY OF VOTER ATTITUDES

Introduction of interviewer:

"Good afternoon (evening). My name is _____. I am conducting a brief survey for the Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library. The purpose is to gather information about the community's satisfaction with the library. May I speak with someone in your household who is a registered voter? My questions will take about 15 minutes to answer."

If the person answering is eligible or calls another eligible householder to the phone, begin the questionnaire. Otherwise, terminate interview closing with, "Thank you very much for your time."

Opening of questionnaire:

"The library is interested is knowing more about the area voters' satisfaction with library buildings and services and their feelings about a tax levy to support improvements. This is a confidential survey and will be used only for library planning. May I ask you a few questions?"

Total/Men/Women

1) In November, Ohioans will be voting for a new governor. What do you think the chances are that you will vote in November? Are you:

certain to vote	27/9/18
probably going to vote	3 /1/2
chances are 50/50 (terminate interview)	
probably not going to vote (terminate interview)	
unsure (terminate interview)	

2) Some people may not be aware that the Willowick, Eastlake, and Willoughby libraries are all in the Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library system. Were you aware of the fact that these three libraries are connected in one system?

yes	23/5/18
no	7 /5/2
unsure	

3) Timberlake residents may not be aware that the Willoughby-Eastlake library system serves Timberlake. Were you aware that Timberlake is served by this system?

yes	27/8/19
no	3 /2/1
unsure	

4) The Willoughby-Eastlake Library recently received the results of a detailed study which examined the present facilities in the three libraries. It was seen that plans to expand and improve the existing buildings are necessary to meet the growing needs of this community. The library is proposing a .37 mill bond issue to expand and improve its three buildings. This would cost the owner of a $70,000 home approximately $9.06 per year for twenty years.

If an election were held today, would you vote for or against this library bond issue?

for (go to 5)	22/8/14
against (go to 5)	4 /1/3
unsure (go to 6)	4 /1/3

5) What is your main reason for voting that way? Anything else?
PRO: library supporter (6); pro-education (6); regular user (4); children in family (4); renovation necessary (2); reasonable levy cost (2); wants library improvement (2); staff is good; benefits all age groups; enhances real estate value; population has grown; reading is important; other libraries offer more; important to stay up to date; wife supports.
CON: cannot afford it (fixed income) (3); vote NO on all tax increases; no improvement is needed; needs persuasive information; property taxes already too high; combine levy & bond issue (deceptive).

(skip to 7)

6) Even though you are undecided about how you would vote, do you lean toward voting for or against a library bond issue?

for	1 /0/1
against	
unsure	3 /1/2

7) The library is also proposing a permanent .3 mill operating levy to maintain these improved facilities. Passage will cost the owner of a $70,000 home approximately $8.35 a year.
If an election were held today, would you vote for or against this library levy?

for (go to 8)	21/8/13
against (go to 8)	3 /1/2
unsure (go to 9)	6 /1/5

8) What is your main reason for voting that way? Anything else?
PRO: reasonable cost (2); keep libraries current; staff deserve fair salaries; trust library to assess valid needs; supports WEPL; property value enhanced; read director's remarks in newspaper (Wickliffe ?).
CON: cannot afford it; net property tax increase over 8 years has been $500-$600; library should disassociate from W-E schools; need must be proven.

(skip to 10)

9) Even though you are undecided about how you would vote, do you lean toward voting for or against a library levy?

for	1 /0/1
against	1 /0/1
unsure	4 /1/3

10) Now I would like to read you some reasons for expanding and improving the three library buildings. For each statement I read, please tell me whether you think that is a good reason for making the additions to the existing buildings and services.
a. Increasing the shelf space available will allow the library to keep many more books & other materials than they can now.

yes	28/10/18
no	
unsure	2 /0/2

b. More space would be available for activities and programs for children.

yes	28/9/19
no	2 /1/1
unsure	

c. The library would be able to afford more computers and other up-to-date equipment.

yes	24/9/15
no	1 /0/1
unsure	5 /1/4

d. There would be separate seating areas for adults and children in all buildings.

yes	21/6/15
no	7 /2/5
unsure	2 /2/0

e. There would be space for adult programs.

yes	23/6/17
no	3 /2/1
unsure	4 /2/2

f. Handicapped persons would have better access to the buildings.

yes	28/9/19
no	1 /1/0
unsure	1 /0/1

g. More space would be available for community groups.

yes	21/7/14
no	6 /3/3
unsure	3 /0/3

11) Now I would like to read you some reasons people have given for opposing the expansion and improvement of the three library buildings. This time, for each statement, please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

a. The library buildings are fine just as they are. There is no reason to expand or improve them.

strongly agree	
agree	5 /1/4
disagree	19/7/12
strongly disagree	3 /1/2
unsure	3 /1/2

b. If we are going to increase taxes, there are more important things to do than improve or expand the libraries.

strongly agree	
agree	8 /4/4
disagree	19/6/13
strongly disagree	2 /0/2
unsure	1 /0/1

c. If they want to improve or expand the libraries, just the people who use them should pay for it.

strongly agree	
agree	1 /0/1
disagree	23/7/16
strongly disagree	6 /3/3
unsure	

d. Having a good library system isn't as important as it used to be.

strongly agree	
agree	
disagree	15/5/10
strongly disagree	15/5/10
unsure	

e. I would like to have improvements in the library, but I just can't afford to have an increase in my property taxes right now.

strongly agree	1 /0/1
agree	8 /1/7
disagree	18/8/10
strongly disagree	2 /1/1
unsure	1 /0/1

12) What if the mayors of Timberlake and the surrounding communities supported the library tax levy? Would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for the levy?

more likely	5 /1/4
less likely	1 /0/1
no difference	24/9/15
unsure	

13) What if the News Herald supported the library tax levy? Would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for the levy?

more likely	10/4/6
less likely	
no difference	19/6/13
unsure	1 /0/1

14) Does your household have one or more library cards to use at the Willoughby-Eastlake libraries?

yes	23/8/15
no	6 /1/5
unsure	1 /1/0

15) Have you or others in your household used this library system in the past year?

yes	23/9/14
no (go to 19)	7 /1/6
unsure (go to 19)	

16) About how often do you or others in your household use the Willoughby-Eastlake system?

once or twice a year	3 /1/2
once in three months	2 /1/1
once a month	11/5/6
once a week	7 /2/5
unsure	

17) Which building do you visit most often?

Eastlake	14/6/8
Garfield Station	
Willoughby	1 /1/0
Willowick	8 /2/6
not a user	7 /1/6

18) I would like to ask you a few questions about the Eastlake(E14) Willowick(W8) Willoughby(C1) library. How would you rate each of these items? Would you say this is excellent, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory?

	Excel.	Satis.	Unsatis.	Unsure
a. The helpfulness of the librarians.	E8 W4	E3 W3	E2	E1 W1 C1
b. The availability of books & materials you want to read.	E3 W2	E9 W4	E1 W1	E1 W1 C1
c. The ease of using the computer to find items.	E3	E6 W5	E1	E4 W3 C1
d. The ability to borrow items from other libraries outside the local system.	E7 W5	E5 W2		E2 W1 C1
e. The appearance of the interior of the building.	W1	E12 W6		E2 W1 C1
f. The programs for children.	E2 W4	E6 W1		E6 W3 C1
g. The library hours.	E1 W1	E12 W5	W1	E1 W1 C1

19) Do you frequently use another public library? Which one?

yes CPL(5); Morley(2); Wickliffe; Mentor; Euclid; MYR/CCPL; LEC; LCC
no 17/7/10
unsure

20) I would like to read you a list of services provided by libraries. The first one is ... (read item and ask). Do you think it is very important, somewhat important, not very important or not at all important for libraries to provide?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not at All Important	Don't Know
a. current best sellers	13/5/8	13/4/9	3/1/2		1/0/1
b. newspapers & magazines	17/7/10	10/3/7	1/0/1		2/0/2
c. encyclopedias & other reference books	26/8/18	4/2/2			
d. literary classics by authors like Shakespeare & Dickens	24/9/15	5/0/5	1/1/0		
e. books for homework & research assignments	29/10/19	1/0/1			
f. audio cassettes & compact discs	9/2/7	15/5/10	4/2/2	1/1/0	1/0/1
g. videocassettes	9/2/7	17/7/10	1/0/1	2/1/1	1/0/1
h. self-help books on subjects like parenting and home improvement	18/8/10	10/2/8	1/0/1	1/0/1	
i. books on hobbies or special interests like antiques or the Civil War	18/7/11	11/3/8	1/0/1		
j. local history materials	23/9/14	6/1/5		1/0/1	
k. career information	19/6/13	10/4/6		1/0/1	
l. business & investment information	16/4/12	13/6/7	1/0/1		
m. legal & health information	18/4/14	9/4/5	1/1/0	1/0/1	1/1/0

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Very Important	Not at All Important	Don't Know
n. information through computer databases	17/5/12	9/4/5	3/0/3		1/1/0
o. programs for children	25/10/15	5/0/5			
p. special materials & services for the handicapped	21/7/14	9/3/6			
q. interlibrary loans for special requests	16/7/9	11/2/9	1/1/0	1/0/1	1/0/1
r. drive-up windows to pick up materials	3/0/3	10/4/6	9/2/7	8/4/4	

21) Do you think that the Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library system is better, worse, or about the same as it was five years ago?

better (go to 22)	15/4/11
worse (go to 22)	
about the same (go to 23)	7 /4/3
unsure (go to 23)	8 /2/6

22) Why is that? Computer system (5); collection (2); staff attitude; playground service; ILL; have come a long way; welcomes children; more familiar; CD's & videos; word of mouth; sees improvement but other libraries better.

23) I'd like to read you a series of statements about the library. For each one tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The first one is...

a. It is important to have a good local public library.

strongly agree	16/4/12
agree	14/6/8
disagree	
strongly disagree	
unsure	

b. The Library Board does a good job of using the tax money it receives.

strongly agree	3 /2/1
agree	17/5/12
disagree	
strongly disagree	
unsure	10/3/7

c. I have little need for the services of a public library.

strongly agree	
agree	5 /2/3
disagree	14/6/8
strongly disagree	10/2/8
unsure	1 /0/1

d. It is necessary to expand & improve the library buildings to meet the growing needs of this community.

strongly agree	8 /3/5
agree	19/6/13
disagree	2 /1/1
strongly disagree	
unsure	1 /0/1

e. Having a good library system is very important to the quality of life in this community.

strongly agree	12/5/7
agree	17/5/12
disagree	1 /0/1
strongly disagree	
unsure	

f. By paying for library improvements we are making an investment in the future of our community.

strongly agree	15/6/9
agree	13/4/9
disagree	1 /0/1
strongly disagree	
unsure	1 /0/1

g. The time has come to vote against all tax increases.

strongly agree	2 /0/2
agree	2 /1/1
disagree	22/6/16
strongly disagree	4 /3/1
unsure	

h. The Willoughby-Eastlake Public Library provides good service to the people in this community.

strongly agree	8 /5/3
agree	18/4/14
disagree	
strongly disagree	
unsure	4 /1/3

Now the last couple of questions.

24) Into which of the following age groups would you say you fall?

18-34 years	6 /1/5
35-49 years	14/6/8
50-64 years	5 /2/3
65 and over	5 /1/4
Refused to answer	

25) How much schooling would you say you have completed?

Grade school	
High school	6 /1/5
Some college/tech	13/5/8
College grad	11/4/7
Refused to answer	

26) How many years have you lived in Lake County? Would you say you have lived in Lake County less than ten years, between ten and twenty years, more than twenty years?

0-10	4 /1/3
10-20	11/5/6
over 20	15/4/11
Unsure/refused	

27) Do you own or rent your home?

own	27/10/17
rent	3 /0/3
Unsure/refused	

This is the end of our survey. Thank you very much for sharing your time and opinions. This has been very helpful.
Respondent was male (10) or female (20).

NOTES

[1]Market Profile Analysis: Community Profile Lake County, Ohio (Donnelley Marketing Information Services, 1989), 1-5.

[2]Charles Evans, "A History of Community Analysis in American Librarianship," Library Trends 24 (January 1976): 444.

[3]Ibid., 449.

[4]Ibid., 451.

[5]Rose Vainstein, "Teaching the Elements of Community Analysis: Problems and Opportunities," Library Trends 24 (January 1976): 616.

[6]Herbert S. White, "The Use and Misuse of Library User Studies," Library Journal 110 (December 1985): 70.

[7]Herbert K. Achleitner and Edward W. Neroda, Methods of Community Analysis With an Emphasis on Libraries (Chicago: CPL Bibliographies, 1980), 2.

[8]Janet M. Lange, "Public Library Users, Nonusers, and Type of Library Use," Public Library Quarterly 8 (1987/88): 50.

[9]M.G. Fancher Beeler and others, eds., Measuring the Quality of Library Service (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1974), 152-60.

[10]Ibid., 165-90.

[11]Morris E. Massey, "Market Analysis and Audience Research for Libraries," Library Trends 24 (January 1976): 473.

[12]Ibid., 475.

[13]Cecil Beach, "Local Funding of Public Libraries," Library Journal 110 (15 June 1985): 28.

[14]Mary C. Kowall, "Strategies for Passing a Referendum," Illinois Libraries 63 (May 1981): 376.

[15]Valerie Darst, "Passing a Library Levy in Hard Times," Show-Me Libraries 33 (December 1981): 18-19.

[16]Douglas Zweizig, "Community Analysis," in Local Public Library Administration, ed. Ellen Altman (Chicago: American Library Association, 1980), 39.

[17]Alice Norton, "Public Relations - Its Meaning and Benefits," in Local Public Library Administration, ed. Ellen Altman (Chicago: American Library Association, 1980), 53.

[18]Pat Coleman and David Yorke, "A Public Library Experiments With Market Research," Library Association Record 77 (May 1975): 107.

[19]Gary M. Shirk, "Financing New Technologies, Equipment/ Furniture Replacement, and Building Renovation: A Survey Report," College & Research Libraries 45 (November 1984): 465-67.

[20]Ernest DeProspo, "The Use of Community Analysis in the Measurement Process," Library Trends 24 (January 1976): 560-61.

[21]Muriel L. Fuller, "Looking at Your Community," Illinois Libraries 57 (February 1975): 76.

[22]Mary Jo Detweiler, "Planning - More Than Process," Library Journal 108 (1 January 1983): 24.

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